My lord, wise men ne'er sit and wail their woes,
But presently prevent the ways to wail.
To fear the foe, since fear oppresseth strength,
Gives in your weakness strength unto your foe,
And so your follies fight against yourself.
Fear and be slain; no worse can come to fight:
And fight and die is death destroying death;
where fearing dying pays death servile breath.

-Shakespeare, "Richard II"

Thomas Vose, CC-BY-NC 2/1/23
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-Your saliva has a naturally occurring painkiller called opiorphin. It's significantly more powerful than morphine - but diluted enough that we're able to function without walking around constantly high.

A single-edged sword in China is called a "dao". There are lots of variants, though.
This version is called a dadao - "big sword." There are lots of others, though.
The jiuhuandao has nine decorative rings along its back, and the wodao looks a lot like a Japanese katana, hence the name- "Wo" means "Japanese."

You Should Read →

As the Fixx would say, ~~"Hey Shit, someone mentioned us!~~ "One thing leads to another and James Burke's books and BBC shows illustrate that better than anyone.

JAMES BURKE
CONNECTIONS
With a New Preface by the Author
FROM PTOLEMY'S ASTROLABE TO THE DISCOVERY OF ELECTRICITY,
HOW INVENTIONS ARE LINKED—AND
HOW THEY CAUSE CHANGE THROUGHOUT HISTORY

The history of human thought makes up what he calls a "knowledge web" of inspiration, chance meetings, old technology repurposed to new ends, and just plain dumb luck, all connected. Kevin Bacon-style. The ideas, the wonder, and the sense of interconnectedness he demonstrates is transformational.

"Grenade" came from "pomegranate," because that's what they looked like.

One type of U.S. grenade, the T-13 "Jeano" was used in WWII - it was developed to weigh the same as a baseball.

Military brass figured any red-blooded American GI would know how to throw one of those.

HOT TAKE:

Men's fashion is stagnant.

This picture is from 1915. Aside from losing the vest and the hat fixation, business clothes haven't changed significantly in over 100 years.

It could be worse, I guess - we don't wear wigs, ruffs or codpieces, but there is an unpleasant lack of imagination. Also, ties are silly and uncomfortable.

The Bluetooth logo is made up of the runes H and B - for Harald Bluetooth, the Norwegian/Danish king for whom the technology is named. (It's thought he had a bad tooth that stood out - the word can also mean "black.")

His father was called "Gorm the Old," who was himself the grandson of a Danish king "Sigurd Snake-in-the-Eye" (who supposedly had such a mark in his eye).

Sigurd's brother was "Ivar the Boneless."

Vikings had great nicknames.

I'm not a fan of consultants.
(Maybe I'm prejudiced.)

-They're often perfectly willing to go along with whatever decision you've already made to give it cover (at significant expense) - and even if it's not a predetermined decision, they're not going to come in and say "Things are great!" That fee has to be justified somehow.

-They use the hammer they have on anything that looks anvil-like - even if it's a screw. An architect hired to consult will give an architectural solution regardless.

-And in the end, sunk cost thinking pressures clients to adopt potentially bad conclusions - or else they languish in a binder, a testament to wasted money.

-And finally, of course, after all is said and done they get to bugger off without having to live with the consequences of their advice.

Have you noticed that there are a lot fewer bugs hitting your windshield than there used to be?

So have scientists, and they call it the "windshield phenomenon" - and it's not good.

Insect populations have dropped significantly in the last few decades, and while that's good in some superficial ways, it's really bad for the food chain and the ecosystem generally. Bees get the publicity, but it's affecting all of them.

Socializing can be hard.
Here are some conversation starters to help out:

- "So what do you do?"
  Followup: "What is your favorite part of the job?"
- To a group: "How do you all know each other?"
- "Do you have any exciting projects you're working on right now?"
- "Do you have any recommendations for things to see around here?"
- "What brought you to this event?"
- "That's a really cool (outfit / bag / etc.)."
- "Mind if I join you over here where it's a bit quieter? Hi, I'm (name)."
- "Are you into books?" (If "no," ditch 'em.) "What are you reading these days?"
- "Do you know many of these people?"
- "Do you get to travel much?"

This is Saraswati, wife of Brahma and goddess of wisdom and learning.

She is credited with creating music (hence the vina) as well as the Sanskrit language and the Vedas, the foundational books of Hindu religious thought.

On her festival day (usually Feb. or Mar.) young children are given their first lesson in reading and writing.

Bullet journaling is a cheap, flexible and fulfilling way to stay organized.

You Need:
- A journal (I use a Moleskine Dotted Journal)
- A pen

That's it, at least for physical supplies!

But you also need:
- Page numbers ← so you can find what you want.
- A table of contents that refers to
- A key for "bullets" you use, depending on how you organize
- An understanding that a useful and valuable journal will not look like the shit you see on Instagram - let go of perfectionism.

You can use such a journal to track all kinds of things:
- Calendar
- To-dos
- Remembrances
- Project notes
- Gift ideas for people
- Weather tracking
- Places to visit
- Inventories of things
- Ideas to pursue
- Places you've been
- Health goals
- Financial tracker
- Scrapbook
- Shopping lists
- Important news
- Musings on topics
- Books (read & to-read)
- Interesting articles
- Music in your head
- Whatever makes sense to you!

Suffragettes faced brutal opposition, especially in England, when fighting for the vote. Beatings and violence were common.

Many turned to martial arts to protect themselves - jiujitsu being a popular choice, as it shows how to deal with larger opponents.

Edith Garrud was an instructor and a major force for women's self-defense.

A few lessons in the Japanese Art of Self Defence at the London School where a class is being formed for women.

4 RPG Books I Like*

I'm a sucker for good world-building and the ideas and adventures it can spark. This setting has it in spades - it is a Bronze Age world where iron is almost magical, technology is minimal and magic is rare and a source of fear. Think "Conan" a world pockmarked with islands of semi-civilization.

Information on what makes Paranoia so good is strictly classified. Access to such knowledge by unauthorized personnel is treason and punishable by immediate termination. The Computer is your friend.

This is the first RPG I got into, and so it holds a special place for me. In retrospect, the mechanics are cumbersome, but the imagination and world-building are stellar. The "Tombs of Gersidi" adventure included in earlier editions is an all-time favorite.

About 60-70% of what makes Tales from the Loop good is Simon Stålenhag's art, admittedly, but it is not to be missed, and I can see how a Hollywood executive would seize on it as the basis for a show. The evocative "alternate '80s" setting and kid-friendly adventuring makes up the rest.

* D&D 4E is not one of them.